IN THE CLAIMS:

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1.   (Currently amended) A method for controlling flooding in a bridged network having a bridge connected to a plurality of networks, said method comprising:

a)   allowing broadcast flooding until a mapping of a MAC address to a port is performed by the bridge; and

b)   disallowing broadcast flooding after the mapping is achieved.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said allowing and disallowing of broadcast flooding is carried out for each MAC address independently.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said bridge maintains a data structure to determine when to allow or disallow broadcast flooding.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said data structure is a filter table.

5. . (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said filter table contains MAC address information with associated flooding time period.

6.   (Cancel) In a bridge device having a plurality of ports, a filtering module comprising:

a)   a flood control unit configured to allow broadcast flooding for a first limited time period, said flood control unit further configured to disallow broadcast flooding for a second time period; and

b) a data structure maintain by said flood control unit configured to maintain flood control data.

7. (Cancel) The filtering module of claim 6, wherein said data structure comprises a filter table containing MAC address information with associated flooding time period.

8. (Cancel) In a bridge device having a plurality of ports, a filtering module comprising:

a) means for allowing broadcast flooding for a first limited time period;

b) means for disallowing broadcast flooding for a second time period; and

c) means for maintaining flood control data operatively coupled to said means for allowing broadcast flooding and said means for disallowing broadcast flooding.

9. (Currently amended) A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for controlling flooding in a bridged network having a bridge connected to a plurality of networks, said method comprising:

a) allowing broadcast flooding until a mapping of a MAC address to a port is performed by the bridge; and

b) disallowing broadcast flooding after the mapping is achieved.

10. (Original) The program storage device of claim 9, wherein said allowing and disallowing of broadcast flooding is carried out for each MAC address independently.

11. (Original) The program storage device of claim 9, wherein said bridge maintains a data structure to determine when to allow or disallow broadcast flooding.

12. (Original) The program storage device of claim 11, wherein said data structure is a filter table.

13. (Original) The program storage device of claim 12, wherein said filter table contains MAC address information with associated flooding time period.